

R E M A R K S

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the masking member comprises

"A stand base upon which there are a plural number of snapping grooves on either side arranged at regular intervals dividing it into a plural number of unit blocks, a tapering inserting part projecting from one side of each unit block and a knob projecting from the other side of each unit block and each unit block having a shape corresponding to said part."

These recitals are supported by the original disclosure in FIGS. 9 - 13 of the present application and the description of those Figures in the specification, as well as original dependent claims 5 and 6, which have accordingly been cancelled as redundant. Claim 7 has also been cancelled, and claim 8 has been made directly dependent on claim 1. Since this Amendment does not increase either the total number of claims or the number of independent claims, no additional fee is necessary.

Claims 1 (independent; amended) and 4 and 8 (both dependent on claim 1) are now in the application.

Amended claim 1, like cancelled claim 6, is limited to a masking member having inserting parts and knobs, and further specifies that the inserting parts are tapering, that a tapering inserting part projects from one side of each unit block, that a knob projects from the other side of each unit block, and that each unit block has a shape corresponding to "said part" on which a washer or a stand of a harness hole plug is put. In the final Office Action, claims 5 - 8, the only claims limited to inserting parts (with or without knobs), were rejected only as unpatentable

over U.S. patent No. 4,913,786 (Horiki et al. '786), under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Accordingly, it is believed sufficient herein to discuss the patentability of amended claim 1 over Horiki et al. '786.

The final Office Action asserts (at p. 5) that in Horiki et al. '786, "The insert per claim 5 is shown as 172 in figures 22-24. The knob per claim 6 can be considered 173 . . . in figure 24." In Horiki et al. '786, however, the only disclosed masking member having any features corresponding to the inserting parts and knobs of present amended claim 1 is the member 170 having a circular head 171, which does not correspond to the unit block of present amended claim 1, much less to a masking member structure having a plural number of grooves dividing it into a plural number of unit blocks with a tapering inserting part projecting from one side of each unit block and a knob projecting from the other side of each unit block.

In the invention of present amended claim 1, each of the unit blocks of the stand base has a corresponding shape to the part around the periphery of a bolt hole having a corresponding shape fitting exactly to the periphery of a washer or the part around the periphery of a harness hole having a corresponding shape fitting exactly to the shape of the stand of a plug when the tapering inserting part is inserted into the bolt hole or the harness hole. Without the inserting part, the unit block of the stand base cannot fit exactly to "said part" on which a washer or a stand of a harness hole plug is put.

It is therefore submitted that claim 1 as herein amended defines a new, useful and unobvious combination of structural features, and as such distinguishes patentably over Horiki et al. '786 (as well as over the other references applied against claim 1

in the final Office Action, neither of which even assertedly discloses anything corresponding to an inserting part or a knob). Claims 4 and 8 are submitted to distinguish in like manner over Horiki et al. '786 (and the other applied references) by virtue of their dependence on amended claim 1.

For the foregoing reasons, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is accordingly courteously requested.

Respectfully,

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I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited this date with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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